



Virginia's Forests

A Reliable Resource

Forestry Topic 22

July 2014

- ◆ Virginia is part of the United States' southern wood basket, some of the most productive and best managed forests in the world.
- ◆ 62 percent of Virginia's land base, nearly 16 million acres (6.47 million hectares), is forest that stretches from the mountains to the sea and consists of more than 100 species of trees that provide multiple economic, environmental and social benefits.
- ◆ Oak-hickory is the predominant forest-type in Virginia occupying 61 percent or 9.7 million acres (3.92 million hectares) of forestland and containing 65 percent or 22.8 billion cubic feet (646 million cubic meters) of the live volume across the State.
- ◆ Loblolly-shortleaf pine is the second most dominant forest-type group with 2.9 million acres (1.17 million hectares); oak-pine and bottomland hardwood forests make up most of the remaining forestland.
- ◆ The majority of forestland in Virginia is owned by almost 374,000 private landowners, with the rest divided between corporate and government landowners.
- ◆ Due to the diversity of the landscape and tree species along with more than 400 years of utilizing our forestlands, Virginia's forest industry spans all product areas.
- ◆ Virginia's forestry industry is a \$17 Billion economic engine that is responsible for more than 103,000 jobs.
- ◆ Virginia has approximately 100 softwood and hardwood sawmills that provide more than 1.2 billion board feet (2.832 million cubic meters) of lumber that is used in construction, furniture, cabinets, flooring, decking, railroad ties, pallets and other products. More than half of the grade hardwood lumber we produce is exported.

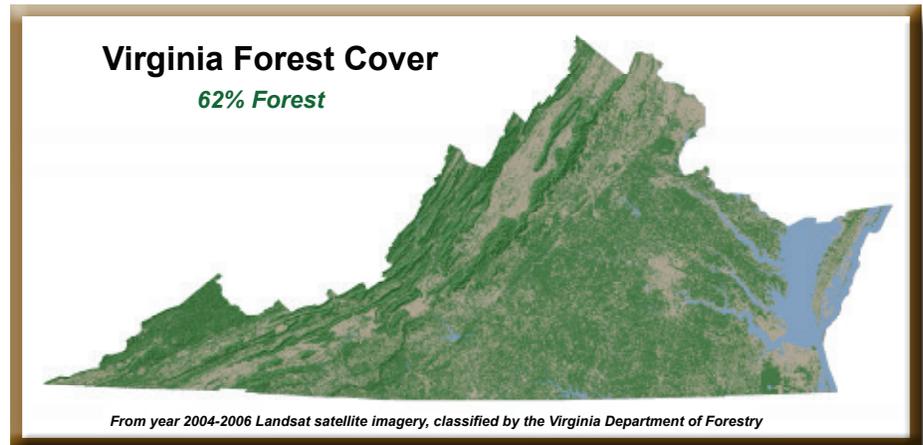


Figure 1 Virginia Forest Cover

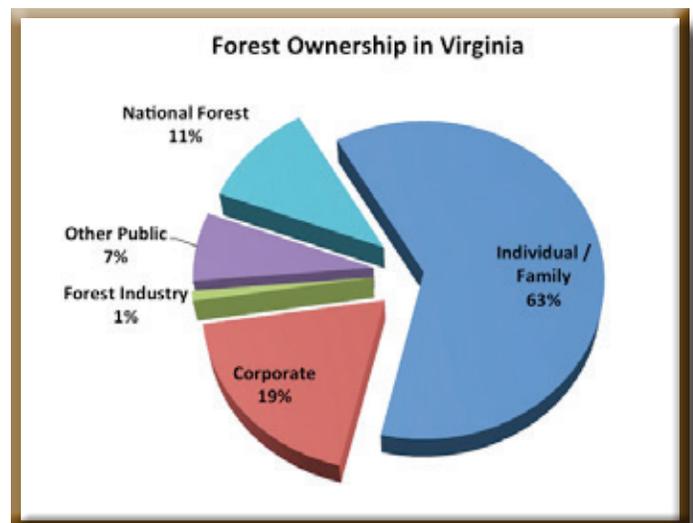


Figure 2 Forest Ownership in Virginia

- ◆ Pulp, paper and panel industries utilize more than 3.2 million cords (11.6 cubic meters) annually.
- ◆ Additional products include post and poles, animal bedding and shavings, industrial wood products, mulch and soil amendments, fuelwood, wood pellets and boiler fuels.

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- ◆ Competition for resource will increase, with pine and forested areas near export facilities seeing the most activity.
- ◆ Even with all the demand for forest products Virginia's forest volumes continue to grow.
- ◆ To ensure that Virginia continues to grow sustainable working forests, Virginia's forest industry worked with the Department of Forestry (VDOF) to develop the Reforestation on Timberlands program in the 1970s to provide cost-share and technical assistance to the state's landowners managing pine forests, funded through a tax on forest products.
- ◆ Additional efforts include operating seed tree orchards and tree nurseries that grow more than 25 million trees annually for reforestation and other projects; continuing research to grow higher-quality trees in a shorter time, and partnering with Virginia Tech, one of the top-rated forestry colleges in the nation, on applied research to continually improve the care, management and utilization of our forests.
- ◆ With proper management, pine seedlings planted today will be able to produce double the volume of wood as the trees just harvested.
- ◆ VDOF also monitors the forest and harvesting and related activities to identify threats, such as insect and disease problems, exotic and invasive species, natural disasters, fires, illegal operations, etc. The Agency monitors 5,000 timber harvests each year to ensure the harvests don't harm our waterways. Once identified, Virginia works with partners and agencies of all levels to address any problems and minimize the impact.

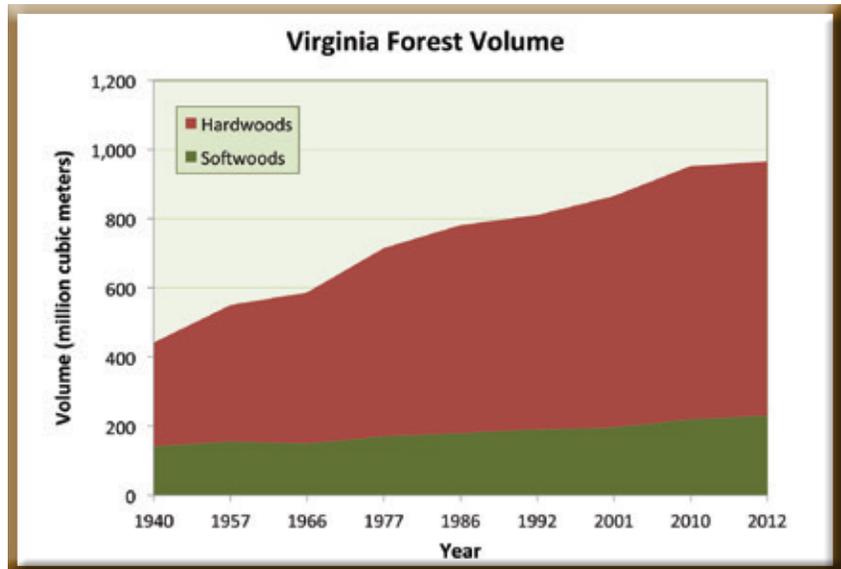


Figure 3 Virginia Forest Volume

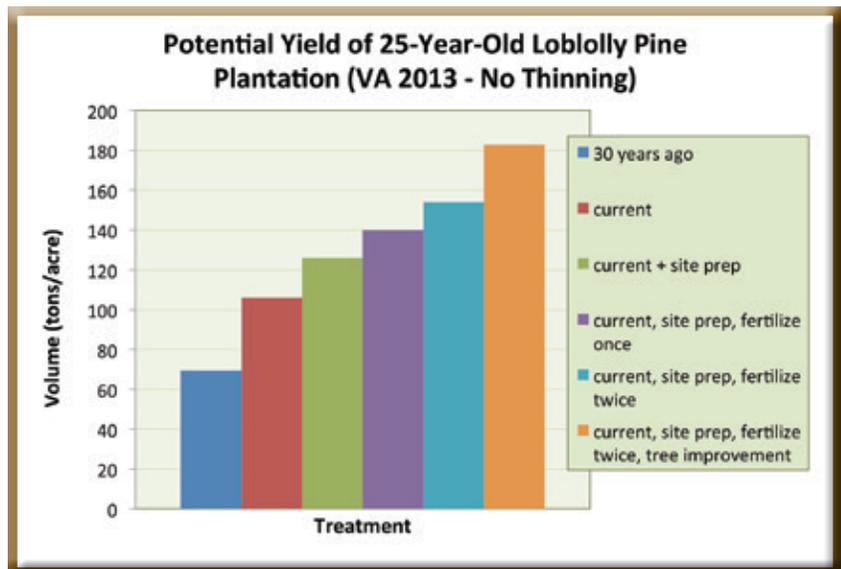


Figure 4 Potential Yield of 25-Year-Old Loblolly Pine Plantation (VA 2013 - No Thinning)



Virginia Department of Forestry
900 Natural Resources Drive, Suite 800
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903
Phone: (434) 977-6555
www.dof.virginia.gov
VDOF FT0022; 07/2014

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